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Letter dated 21 May 2002 from the Permanent Representative of Israel to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General

I wish to draw your attention to the latest incidents in the ongoing campaign of Palestinian terrorism directed against the citizens of Israel.

Sunday afternoon, at approximately 4.15 p.m. (local time), a Palestinian terrorist disguised as an Israeli soldier entered an outdoor market in the coastal Israeli city of Netanya and detonated powerful explosives strapped to his body. The bomb was packed with nails, screws and other objects designed to inflict maximum pain and suffering. The force of the blast killed three Israelis and wounded more than 50 others, several of them critically. Both the terrorist organizations Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine and Hamas claimed responsibility for the bombing.

In addition to the Netanya bombing, there have been scores of attempted suicide attacks in recent days. Among them, a Palestinian suicide bomber detonated his explosives at the busy Taanakhim Junction yesterday, killing himself but causing no injuries. The terrorist detonated his explosives as the police approached him after he had aroused the suspicion of a nearby driver. Also yesterday, police apprehended a female suicide bomber near the Palestinian-controlled town of Tulkarm. The woman was en route to carry out an attack inside Israel.

These incidents are merely the latest in the continuing campaign of Palestinian terrorism that has been detailed in letters dated 8 May 2002 (A/56/940-S/2002/533), 1 May 2002 (A/56/936-S/2002/503), 12 April 2002 (A/56/909-S/2002/415), 10 April 2002 (A/56/912-S/2002/373), 1 April 2002 (A/56/895-S/2002/337), 27 March 2002 (A/56/891-S/2002/322), 26 March 2002 (A/56/889-S/2002/315), 18 March 2002 (A/56/880-S/2002/293), 14 March 2002 (A/56/876-S/2002/280), 11 March 2002 (A/56/867-S/2002/257), 8 March 2002 (A/56/864-S/2002/252), 5 March 2002 (A/56/857-S/2002/233), 4 March 2002 (A/56/854-S/2002/222), 27 February 2002 (A/56/843-S/2002/208), 20 February 2002 (A/56/828-S/2002/185), 19 February 2002 (A/56/824-S/2002/174), 11 February 2002 (A/56/819-S/2002/164), 8 February 2002 (A/56/814-S/2002/155), 28 January 2002 (A/56/798-S/2002/126),

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22 January 2002 (A/56/788-S/2002/104), 18 January 2002 (A/56/781-S/2002/86), 16 January 2002 (A/56/774-S/2002/73), 11 January 2002 (A/56/771-S/2002/47), 4 January 2002 (A/56/766-S/2002/25), 13 December 2001 (A/56/706-S/2001/1198), 4 December 2001 (A/56/678-S/2001/1150), 30 November 2001 (A/56/670-S/2001/1141), 27 November 2001 (A/56/663-S/2001/1121), 12 November 2001 (A/56/617-S/2001/1071), 5 November 2001 (A/56/604-S/2001/1048), 24 October 2001 (A/56/506-S/2001/1011), 19 October 2001 (A/56/492-S/2001/990), 17 October 2001 (A/56/483-S/2001/975), 8 October 2001 (A/56/450-S/2001/948), 5 October 2001 (A/56/444-S/2001/943), 3 October 2001 (A/56/438-S/2001/938), 24 September 2001 (A/56/406-S/2001/907), 20 September 2001 (A/56/386-S/2001/892), 17 September 2001 (A/56/367-S/2001/875), 7 September 2001 (A/56/346-S/2001/858), 4 September 2001 (A/56/331-S/2001/840), 30 August 2001 (A/56/325-S/2001/834), 27 August 2001 (A/56/324-S/2001/825), 13 August 2001 (A/56/294-S/2001/787), 9 August 2001 (A/56/286-S/2001/780), 8 August 2001 (A/56/280-S/2001/775), 6 August 2001 (A/56/272-S/2001/768), 27 July 2001 (A/56/225-S/2001/743), 26 July 2001 (A/56/223-S/2001/737), 17 July 2001 (A/56/201-S/2001/706), 13 July 2001 (A/56/184-S/2001/696), 3 July 2001 (A/56/138-S/2001/662), 2 July 2001 (A/56/131-S/2001/656), 21 June 2001 (A/56/119-S/2001/619), 19 June 2001 (A/56/98-S/2001/611), 18 June 2001 (A/56/97-S/2001/604), 13 June 2001 (A/56/92-S/2001/585), 11 June 2001 (A/56/91-S/2001/580), 4 June 2001 (A/56/85-S/2001/555), 30 May 2001 (A/56/81-S/2001/540), 25 May 2001 (A/56/80-S/2001/524), 18 May 2001 (A/56/78-S/2001/506), 11 May 2001 (A/56/72-S/2001/473), 9 May 2001 (A/56/69-S/2001/459), 1 May 2001 (A/55/924-S/2001/435), 23 April 2001 (A/55/910-S/2001/396), 16 April 2001 (A/55/901-S/2001/364), 28 March 2001 (A/55/863-S/2001/291), 27 March 2001 (A/55/860-S/2001/280), 26 March 2001 (A/55/858-S/2001/278), 19 March 2001 (A/55/842-S/2001/244), 5 March 2001 (A/55/821-S/2001/193), 2 March 2001 (A/55/819-S/2001/187), 14 February 2001 (A/55/787-S/2001/137), 13 February 2001 (A/55/781-S/2001/132), 2 February 2001 (A/55/762-S/2001/103), 25 January 2001 (A/55/748-S/2001/81), 23 January 2001 (A/55/742-S/2001/71), 28 December 2000 (A/55/719-S/2000/1252), 22 November 2000 (A/55/641-S/2000/1114), 20 November 2000 (A/55/634-S/2000/1108) and 2 November 2000 (A/55/540-S/2000/1065).

The Government of Israel holds the Palestinian Authority fully responsible for the attack in Netanya. Operation Defensive Shield has resulted in a dramatic decline in terrorist activity. Even so, Palestinian terrorists continue with their attempts to launch attacks and kill Israeli civilians on a daily basis. Rather than fulfil its obligations to fight terror, the Palestinian leadership continues to incite its people to violence and to support the actions of terrorist organizations. In recent weeks, over 20 attempted bombings have been thwarted through the concerted efforts of Israeli security forces. It is these efforts, and only these efforts, that stand between Palestinian terrorists and their intended victims.

Despite their anti-terror rhetoric, the Palestinian leadership has taken no significant action that would prevent a resumption of terrorist attacks against Israel. The terrorist organization Hamas continues to operate in Gaza virtually unhindered and its leadership remains free and able to coordinate deadly terrorist operations. This situation persists despite Hamas' continued calls for holy war and the destruction of Israel and the repeated declarations of its leaders promising a renewed wave of attacks against Israel.

Israel calls upon the international community to exert maximum pressure on the Palestinian leadership to seize the opening that stands before us as a result of the relative quiet we have experienced in recent weeks. Further action must be taken to dismantle Palestinian terrorist organizations by imprisoning their members, cutting off their funding and destroying their facilities. The destruction of Palestinian terrorist capabilities is essential if the efforts currently under way are to be successful in returning the parties to a peaceful process aimed at addressing the aspirations of the Palestinian people and achieving a lasting solution to the conflict.

I should be grateful if you would arrange to have the text of this letter circulated as a document of the fifty-sixth session of the General Assembly, under agenda item 166, and of the Security Council.

(*Signed*) Yehuda **Lancry**
Permanent Representative